

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

THE MOONSTONE. By Wilkie Collins. New York: Harper & Brothers, Philadelphia Agents: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

Ever the most startling of novelists, dealing entirely with the sensational, Mr. Collins has at last surpassed himself, and stands forth as the author of one of the most ultra alarming works of the day. The plot of the work is the old fable that in one of the temples of India was a diamond—the moonstone—which was guarded day and night for many hundred years by three Brahmins. If it was removed, these devotees were sworn to give up their lives to the recovery of the lost treasure. The British army took the city in which the deity had his temple, and an officer took the moonstone to England. The three Indians follow it, and it is their pursuit of it that the story tells us of. The narrative is given in the style of contributions by various parties, each telling what he knows of the stone. It is consequently disconnected. The great secret of the whole work is, who stole it? It seems that the stone was left by a nervous uncle to a beautiful niece, and on the first night of its being worn by her it is stolen. The niece, who is in love with Mr. Franklin Blake, acts peculiarly, is thought crazy, and insults Franklin. After infinite trouble it comes out that Franklin in his sleep stole the moonstone. What became of it then? It seems that in his sleep he hid it, and it in turn was stolen from him by a cousin, who is depicted as thoroughly virtuous. The cousin is murdered and the stone is never more heard of until it is reported as such in the house of the idol in the heart of India. Blake and the beautiful niece get married, and the "Moonstone" is concluded amid the jingling of bells. Such is the plot, and against it we must utter an indignant protest. In the first place it is cruelly unnatural. If the scene had been laid in Barbary, well and good; but in England it is absurd. In the second place, it is disconnected. There is no want of plots. It is very loosely put together. In the last place, we do not have the thread of the story carried out so as to make a satisfactory solution of the problem. It is, in fact, a failure as a literary work, although it has its interest as a novel.

A HAND-BOOK OF POLITICS FOR 1868. By Edward McPherson, L.L.D., Philip & Son, Washington.

The success which has attended the appearance of the two previous contributions of Mr. McPherson on the political history of our country has induced him to issue the present work, which is really invaluable. It contains the substance of his previous works, together with all the proclamations and platforms for the present year. As a manual of daily reference it is as valuable as it is a political history. By an admirable system of indexing he has so arranged all the parts that any of them can be found at once, and it will be hailed with great pleasure by the reading public as a most opportune work.

LIFE AND SERVICES OF GENERAL U. S. GRANT. By Henry Coppee, Richardson & Co., Philadelphia Agents: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

The edition before us, authorized by a writer of real merit, is probably the standard history of the life of General Grant. Without detracting from the many and great advantages of other works, we must give to Professor Coppee great credit for industry and research. The truthfulness of the military portion is evidenced by General Rawlings, while the encomiums lavished on it as to the other portions, attests its reliability. It is prefaced by an excellent portrait on steel.

FARM TALK, by George E. Brackett. Lee & Sheppard, Boston. Philadelphia Agents: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

In an allegorical and attractive form, the little work before us endeavors to teach to the young people of the country the great and important truths of farming. It does not do so gaudily and abstrusely, but by mingling familiar conversations with the instruction, teaches without the learner having to study. By this means, to children and the uneducated, much more information can be communicated than by assuming to teach. We do not doubt but that the work will do good, and be welcome to many households.

RESOURCES OF CALIFORNIA, by John S. Hittell. A. Romer & Co., Philadelphia Agents, G. W. Pitzer.

The compilation of statistics made public by Mr. Hittell is a useful work for Californians, and also for all those who take an interest in the resources of the far west. If it paints in too glaring colors some of the advantages of the Pacific coast, it is on the whole reliable, and much of its information is new.

PUBLICATIONS OF E. H. BUTLER & CO.—As publishers of school-books of the highest order of merit, there is no house in the United States which can take the palm from Messrs. E. H. Butler & Co. We speak advisedly when we say that their reputation in this specialty is second to none. In addition to a very large edition of Serial Geographies by Mitchell, which are already in use in 10,000 schools, they are now engaged in publishing a most valuable series of Spellers, by Joseph C. Mandale. They consist of three works, the Primary, Common School, and Complete Speller, and are peculiarly adapted to our Public Schools. We have examined these works, and can commend them for the simplicity and excellence of system and thorough graduation from the easiest to the most difficult task.

We have received from E. H. Butler & Co., an excellent edition of Cesar, with map and copious notes. It is by William Brigham, A. M., and is reliable, because of the fullness of the explanation and notes which abound throughout the work, and explain the text.

J. C. Garrigue sends us the "Teacher's Guide to Palestine," by Mr. Osborn. It is intended to aid Sabbath-school teachers in their ex-

positions of the geographical positions of places referred to in Scripture, and will prove a most valuable work.

"FOOT PRINTS OF LIFE" is the title of a practical effusion of Dr. Philip Harvey, and which is published by Wells, N. Y. It is intended as a defense of Phrenology and its kindred sciences, and is a curious mixture of anatomy and poetry. So curious as to be, in many places, decidedly amusing.

"HORACE WILSON" is a little religious story published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., and written by Mrs. M. J. Mallory. Its moral is excellent, and the style is pure and fresh. We commend this little tale to the Sabbath Schools as a welcome addition.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

A Discussion on Their Surface Geology, in the National Academy of Sciences.

The New York Times letter, describing the last day's session of the National Academy of Sciences, at Northampton, Mass., contains the following:—

A paper was read on "Some Points in the Surface Geology of the Region West of the Rocky Mountains," by J. D. Whitney. No subject has been so much discussed of late years as the "drift." The great experience of Professor Whitney enables him to present this subject with acceptance. Previous discussion has related to the region east of the Rocky Mountains. In California there is no true northern drift, no transport of material in one general direction. The transportation has been of a local character. In the Sierras are numerous traces of ancient glaciers. The area occupied by them is very limited, and the work performed has been insignificant. None of them were south of 35 deg. 30 min. of latitude, extending northerly about one-third the length of the State. The traces of the extinct glaciers have been beautifully preserved, and nowhere can the phenomena be more easily studied. The test development of them was in the Tolueme valleys. There were three general areas of these glaciers:—in Central California, Oregon, and British Columbia. Existing glaciers extend as far south as latitude 53 deg., at the altitude of 13,000 to 15,000 feet, and are found abundantly in British America and Alaska, but do not occur in the United States proper. There are no glacial markings in the high Northern latitudes, except about the Mississippi, and therefore the area occupied by it in the United States is not more than a tenth of its surface. The extinct glaciers of Washington Territory approach the sea level near Vancouver's Island.

The subject of the formation of lakes was then introduced. Professor Whitney disagreed with the views of Ramsay, who thought glaciers were the chief agents of lake erosion. Lakes were not of necessary occurrence in glacial regions, and there were great numbers of lakes in regions like British Columbia and Russian Europe, where no traces of glacial action can be found. Lakes are dependent upon meteorological conditions. There must be a surplus of rainfall. Nevada was once covered by a wonderful network of lakes, but they dried up for want of rain, and their bottoms are occupied by the "salt flats." The great chain of lakes in the North America, from Erie to the Arctic Ocean, occupy a geological depression—not due to special erosion. They are in a belt of country two hundred miles wide, and parallel to the Rocky Mountains.

The ground was maintained that an incidental cause is an evidence of submergence. These indentations have been called *Fjords*, from their local name in Sweden. None of them are to be found on the western American coast north of Chili, but they would be abundant in California if the coast should sink a thousand feet. None of these *fjords* are found in the tropics, and they always occur where high land borders the sea, and the indentations are on the west sides of the ridges. Inasmuch as water has been so powerful an agent of erosion in California, where the work performed by ice has been very slight, Professor Whitney has been led to esteem of more consequence the action of the former.

Professor Newberry described a great lake that once existed between the region of Lake Superior and New York, and suggested that some of the lakes of Oregon had been drained by natural causes.

Mr. Gabb thought that the lakes of Oregon and Nevada had disappeared by simple drying up. He remarked that he had recently examined some of the clays said to have been produced during the drift period in South America by Professor Agassiz, and found marine fossils in them. As these specimens came from a locality five hundred miles farther up the tributaries of the Amazon than Agassiz penetrated, he thought the views of Agassiz incorrect.

Professor Guyot thought the facts presented by Professor Whitney confirmed his own theory of the glacial period, that the cold was chiefly due to meteorological causes. When the amount of precipitation in the winter is so great that the heat of the summer cannot melt the ice, then we have the conditions requisite to produce a glacial period, and the fact of the restriction of the ice to the eastern part of the continent was favorable to his theory. He showed the close relations of the European and American drift by pointing out on the map the proximity of the two fields. They covered the eastern part of the latter and the western part of the former continent. He did not think that many of the lake basins of the world had been excavated by glaciers.

A view had been suggested by Ball, of Canada, to the effect that rock might have been excavated by the falling of torrents into ice crevasses very much like a boring apparatus. A modification of this view, proposed privately by Shaler, added the effect of heat from below. The effects of ice would prevent the radiation of heat from below, which might melt the stratum of the ice, and this water, in the effort to escape to the surface, might excavate some of the solid beds.

Some of the curved lake basins might have been partly excavated by the solvent action of water, dissolving the carbonate of lime and carrying it off down stream. He also pointed out the difference between the wearing out of a perpendicular gorge and a wide valley. The former would be excavated by a current, flowing directly onward without any accessions of volume; the latter presupposes the existence of abundant rains, washing down the upper edges of the banks.

Tremendous Glacier Fall Near Chamounix.

The *Corrier delle Alpi* gives the following account of the fall of a glacier at Blatières:—"Last Monday, at 3 in the morning, a dense cloud spread itself over the valley of Chamounix. Thunder was heard, and its roar awoke the whole village, the inhabitants of which directed their looks towards the peak of Blatières, where a cloud of smoke was observed on the crest of the mountain which supports the glacier del Pellegriin. All cried out that it had given way. The peasants of the valley ran to and fro to secure their cattle, and all contemplated in amazement the most stupendous spectacle ever seen in the valley of Chamounix. The commotion caused by this immense avalanche was indescribable. It carried away in its passage pines, bridges, and deserted cottages, until it reached the cascade of Dard, the roar of which was deafening; it then took a different course from that of the torrent, and opening up a new route for itself it rushed on to the meadows and gardens of the Royal Hotel, destroying whole crops of rye and potatoes. After having distributed itself over the meadows wherever it found an outlet, the great mass formed an immense lake which for some time will be the admiration of visitors to Chamounix. This is one of the rarest occurrences that has ever taken place in the valley."

ENGLAND.

Capital on "Strike"—No Confidence and No New Investments.

From the London Times, Aug. 31. With consols at 94, with money in abundance amounting to a glut, with a wheat harvest as yet the average, with peace abroad and tranquillity at home, we certainly ought to be doing well. There is no reason at first sight why trade should not be brisk, labor in demand, and practically so well remunerated. Unfortunately, things are not exactly so. Trade does, indeed, as we shall presently observe, show pleasant symptoms of revival, but it is still not active, and the features of a money market are as yet delusive. Consols are at 94, and the price of the stock is higher than they would be if there were a more wholesome competition for unemployed capital. When it was argued four or five years ago that the English funds would never again be above 90, there was reason enough, as it appeared, not truth, in the doctrine maintained. What was meant by the assertion was that in the new field of finance opened up under the operation of limited liability investments offering a 7 per cent. rate would be plentiful, and practically so safe, as to draw away money from securities yielding only half that rate of interest. Even cautious investors would gradually be attracted to speculations of such promise, and the general level of the market would be raised, and stocks of the kingdom would lower their value from the recorded average of 92½ to 90 at the outside. We repeat, there was reason in these views, but the conclusion was upset by the unexpected success of the new issue, and the carrying of the investments of 1865 did but confirm the old adage, and show that "good interest means bad security"; the experience of 1866 alarmed people beyond all measure, and the prospect of a more active development of our industrial resources, is either gradually receding into consols or kept unemployed in immense amounts till confidence and opportunities may at length return. Of this happy consummation we think "good times" will be brought in, but the trade reports which appeared in our last impression, * * * The prospect, as it appears to us, is none the less satisfactory for being at present only moderately bright. In a weaker economy it is not altogether likely that we should gradually rise the more permanent will be the effects, and the same rule may hold good in the vicissitudes and fluctuations of trade. The truth is the effects of the last panic have been beyond all price at any price whatever. They have not been assumed, beyond the magnitude of the cause. It must be remembered that the pressure was felt long after the crisis. The collapse of one concern after another was followed, not only by the immediate withdrawal of money, but by a succession of calls for further contributions. Limited liability, as actually employed, had proved a snare, for indeed the responsibility of a shareholder was thought "limited" only in the sense that it would not admit of ruin. Unconscious investors imagined that their liabilities were limited to the sums they had paid down, without thinking that they were still answerable to the full amount of their shares. The actual embarrassment was produced and protracted conspired with the panic to generate a distrust which has appeared almost interminable, so that not only in this country, but in France, Belgium, and Germany, money has been a long time in the banks while trade and industry have languished for want of aliment and supplies.

Nothing could show more forcibly the timidity of capital. The arguments that caustic after all, is as much a part of the employment of money, as the found of no practical weight. True, the owners of money who will not employ it get nothing for it; but to this for a time they are content to submit, and for a longer time, indeed, they will do so, as long as they can see a state of things was fairly described by the assertion that capital, in its turn, was "on strike." It has been "on strike" for these two years, and though capitalists have suffered like all other classes, it is but now that they have made any sign of coming in. The problem before us is of incalculable importance it could be thought out and solved. Idle capital means unemployment and stagnation, and what these mean in their effects on the public welfare need not be said. It would be far better to have the money that money should be dear than that it should be cheap in the sense in which it is cheap now. In reality, notwithstanding its quoted value, it is still so dear as not to be had by ordinary means, and the result is a general stagnation of money. Three years ago we went too fast and too far. Money was lent purely on the promise of interest and without sufficient care for security. Such terms of course for a time an incredible impetus to trade. Their inevitable catastrophe, and after it such an enduring terror as was never before known. Let us hope that the quiet and gradual brightening of the commercial horizon now at length appears, and that the money market will be in a state of confidence—in fact, the accumulations of the last two years are ready for use when the opportunity returns. For that we think we may be anxious to wait, and it is truly to be hoped that it may be now at hand.

III-Natured Proverbs.

A writer in the London Quarterly Review says:—"Unamiable features and characteristics often stamp the proverbs of particular nations, and such we are shy of reproducing. Thus the Italian makes a merit of revenge, and his proverbs teem with justification of deceit and guile to accomplish the gratification of that passion. Archbishop Trevisan gives us this instance:—"Wait time and place to take your revenge, for it never will be had by a hurry and it may be paralleled by the proverb of such a nature:—"He who cannot revenge himself is weak, he who will not is contemptible; and 'Who offends writes on sand, who is offended on marble.' Perhaps, too, in these which follow:—"Thank you, pretty pussy, was the death of my cat," and "He laughs well that laughs last," there lurks a justification of glozing words and of 'biding one's time,' for the evil purpose of compassing the most unchristian triumphs. In Spanish proverbs the worst feature seems to be a tendency to sneer at womanhood, the gallantry of his countrymen having rendered the Spaniard rhetorical as to female worth and virtue. A woman and a mule," he says, "must be made handsome by the mouth," i. e., 'with good keeping.' 'For whom,' he asks, 'does the blind man's wife paint herself?' Appropos of the birth of a daughter, he has a proverbial expression, 'Alas! father, another daughter is born to you,'—'daughter' being apparently a synonym for 'misfortune.' But he out-herods Herod when he cherishes a law like this on the same topic:—"Three daughters and a mother are four devils for the father."

Centennial Celebration at Mason, N. H.

The citizens of Mason, N. H., celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the organization of their town on the 26th instant. The town is situated on the southern border of New Hampshire, at the present terminus of the Peterboro' and Shirley Railroad, which branches from the Pithsburg at Groton Junction. Its territory is about six miles square, and it is divided substantially into two communities or settlements, known as the Centre and the village.

The orator of the day, John B. Hill, one of the venerable citizens of the town, seventy-two years of age, and favorably known as the author of the "History of Mason," commenced his address with the statement that just one hundred years ago Obadiah Parker left the town of Mason for a journey to Portsmouth, being instructed by a vote of the citizens to procure in their behalf from the Provincial Governor, John Wentworth, an act of incorporation as a town. The circumstances under which the journey was made through the then all surrounding wilderness, and the formalities necessary in the conduct of the affair with his Majesty's august representative were depicted, and the cost of obtaining the franchise as recorded on the town books, was stated to be £12 6s. 6d. It had been voted to have the town called Sharon, but it was decided by the Governor, and agreed to by the delegate to name it Mason, in honor of Captain John Mason, the original grantee of lands in New Hampshire. The orator then exhibited which the journey was made through the then all surrounding wilderness, and the formalities necessary in the conduct of the affair with his Majesty's august representative were depicted, and the cost of obtaining the franchise as recorded on the town books, was stated to be £12 6s. 6d. It had been voted to have the town called Sharon, but it was decided by the Governor, and agreed to by the delegate to name it Mason, in honor of Captain John Mason, the original grantee of lands in New Hampshire. The orator then exhibited which the journey was made through the then all surrounding wilderness, and the formalities necessary in the conduct of the affair with his Majesty's august representative were depicted, and the cost of obtaining the franchise as recorded on the town books, was stated to be £12 6s. 6d. 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